

Definition: Micro-Blogs



“Microblogging is an online broadcast medium that exists as a specific form of blogging. A microblog differs from a traditional blog in that its content is typically smaller in both actual and aggregated file size. Microblogs ‘allow users to exchange small elements of content such as short sentences, individual images, or video links’¹, which may be the major reason for their popularity. These small messages are sometimes called *microposts*.² One of the most popular platforms ist twitter.

example of a micro-blog post ³

Definition: Hashtag

“A hashtag is a type of metadata tag used on social networks such as Twitter and other microblogging services, allowing users to apply dynamic, user-generated tagging which makes it possible for others to easily find messages with a specific theme or content; [...] Users create and use hashtags by placing the number sign or pound sign # [...] in front of [...] usually a word or unspaced phrase, in or at the end of a message. [...] Searching for that hashtag will yield each message that has been tagged with it. A hashtag archive is consequently collected into a single stream under the same hashtag. [...] Hashtags are mostly used in unmoderated, ad hoc discussion forums; any combination of characters led by a hash symbol is a hashtag, and any hashtag, if promoted by enough individuals, can ‘trend’ and attract more individual users to discussion. On Twitter, when a hashtag becomes extremely popular, it will appear in the ‘Trending Topics’ area of a user’s homepage. The trending topics can be organized by geographic area or by all of Twitter. Hashtags are neither registered nor controlled by any one user or group of users. [...] [A]ny given hashtag can theoretically be used in perpetuity. They do not contain any set definitions, meaning that a single hashtag can be used for any number of purposes, as chosen by the creators of them.”⁴

¹ Kaplan Andreas M.; Haenlein Michael (2011). "The early bird catches the news: Nine things you should know about micro-blogging" (PDF). *Business Horizons*, 54(2). 6/5/2014.

² wikipedia: "mirco-blogging", https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microblogging#cite_note-kaplan10early-1, 6/6/2018.

³ screenshot of <https://twitter.com/MFOLseattle/status/1003739862124584960>, 6/7/2017.

⁴ wikipedia: "hashtag", <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hashtag>, 6/7/2018.

How to: Analyze Micro-Blogs

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How to: Analyze Micro-Blogs



Screenshot of <https://twitter.com/MFOLSeattle/status/1003739862124584960>, 6/7/2017

Step 1: Introduction

- Give **available information on the context**:
 - o name of person who published the post name/personal identification [@...], number of followers, number of posts, [if possible: location, profile information]
 - o date and place of publication,
 - o references to other micro-bloggers
 - o number of likes, reposts or comments or any other kind of additional information.
- Identify the **main issue** the post refers to.

Step 2: Description

- Describe the **content** of the post, the use of **hashtags** and (if possible)
 - o the comments in the comment section of the platform on which it was published
 - o the photo/video shared
 - o the image/gif/meme shared.

Step 3: Analysis

- **Provide contextual knowledge.** Explain the political or historical background of the post.
- Explain **the message of the post** and **the writer's perspective**. To do this, analyze...
 - o the language used (cf. stylistic devices),
 - o the intended audience,
 - o (if possible) the use of emojis,
 - o (if possible) the use of hashtags (to analyze the popularity, trends and correlations of hashtags use <https://hashtagify.me>),
 - o (if possible) the photo/video shared
 - o (if possible) the image/gif/meme shared (cf. *How to: Analyze Internet Memes*).



Step 4: Evaluation

Evaluate the effectiveness of the post. Determine what makes it sharable: humor, exaggeration, new perspective, choice of words, analogies, ...

Go further:

Research

- In order to combat "*fake news*", determine the post's trustworthiness by comparing and contrasting its contents with other sources.

Explore

- world map of real-time twitter trends: <https://www.trendsmap.com/#>
- hashtags on twitter: <https://twitter.com/search-home?lang=en>

